

City of Clearwater

*Main Library - Council Chambers
100 N. Osceola Avenue
Clearwater, FL 33755*



Meeting Minutes

Monday, April 28, 2025

1:00 PM

Main Library - Council Chambers

Community Redevelopment Agency

Roll Call

Present 5 - Chair Bruce Rector, Trustee Ryan Cotton, Trustee Michael Mannino, Trustee David Allbritton, and Trustee Lina Teixeira

Also Present: Jennifer Poirrier – City Manager, Daniel Slaughter – Assistant City Manager, David Margolis – City Attorney, Rosemarie Call – City Clerk, Nicole Sprague – Deputy City Clerk, and Jesus Niño – CRA Executive Director

To provide continuity for research, items are listed in agenda order although not necessarily discussed in that order.

Unapproved**1. Call to Order – Chair Rector**

The meeting was called to order at 1:00 p.m.

Council observed a moment of silence in remembrance of the life lost in last night's ferry boat accident.

2. Approval of Minutes

- 2.1 Approve the minutes of the March 31, 2025 CRA meeting as submitted in written summation by the City Clerk.

Trustee Teixeira moved to approve the minutes of the March 31, 2025 CRA meeting as submitted in written summation by the City Clerk. The motion was duly seconded and carried unanimously.

3. Citizens to be Heard Regarding Items Not on the Agenda – None.**4. New Business Items**

- 4.1 Present April Business Spotlight to Chiang Mai Thai and Sushi Bar.

Chiang Mai Thai & Sushi Bar as the fourth recipient of the Business Spotlight Program.

As one of the longest-standing establishments in the downtown corridor, Chiang Mai Thai & Sushi Bar has been a cornerstone of the local dining scene for decades. Now guided by the next generation of ownership, the restaurant

continues to honor its culinary roots while embracing new opportunities to engage with the community.

Most recently, Chiang Mai Thai & Sushi Bar brought regional attention to Downtown Clearwater through a featured Lao New Year cooking segment on Bay News 9. This platform not only highlighted the restaurant's cultural heritage but also helped shine a light on the diverse and thriving small business community in the downtown area.

Looking ahead, Chiang Mai Thai & Sushi Bar is committed to deepening its role in the cultural and economic vibrancy of Downtown. With plans to participate in and host future events, the restaurant remains dedicated to celebrating Southeast Asian culture and fostering a sense of connection among residents and visitors alike.

STRATEGIC PRIORITY:

- 2.1 Strengthen public-private initiatives that attract, develop, and retain diversified business sector.
- 3.1 Support neighborhood identity through services and programs that empower community pride and belonging.

CRA Specialist Tasha Hadley provided a video presentation.

4.2 Approve recommended changes to the North Greenwood Residential Grant Program and authorize the appropriate officials to execute same.

Staff recommends updating the North Greenwood Residential Grant Program with the proposed outlined changes below to improve customer service, enhance clarity, and remove barriers for applicants. These updates aim to create a smoother grant process for all stakeholders. On April 7, 2025, these recommended changes were presented to the North Greenwood Community Advisory Board and received approval to proceed to the CRA Trustees for consideration

Recommended Changes:

- Add language to allow community service hours waived, be added back to the total grant amount, not to exceed \$20,000 (Page 2, under section 3)
 - To provide clarity to the language of the grant program.
- Remove 12 months and add 36 (Page 4, under Eligibility Criteria)
 - For the purposes of this application, the total CRA grant value that an Owner has received over such period shall be the combined value, in the 12 36-month period immediately

preceding the submission of an application for this program - This helps ensure that more residents in the North Greenwood Community have a fair opportunity to benefit from available funding.

STRATEGIC PRIORITY:

1.5 Embrace a culture of innovation that drives continuous improvement and successfully serves all our customers.

3.1 Support neighborhood identity through services and programs that empower community pride and belonging.

Trustee Allbritton moved to approve recommended changes to the North Greenwood Residential Grant Program and authorize the appropriate officials to execute same. The motion was duly seconded and carried unanimously.

4.3 Approve recommended changes to the North Greenwood Commercial Grant Program and authorize the appropriate officials to execute same.

Staff recommends updating the North Greenwood Commercial Grant Program with the proposed outlined changes below. These updates aim to create a smoother grant process for all stakeholders. On April 7, 2025, these recommended changes were presented to the North Greenwood Community Advisory Board and received approval to proceed to the CRA Trustees for consideration

Recommended Updates:

- Add language to allow community service hours waived, be added back to the total grant amount, not to exceed \$75,000 - to provide clarity to the language of the grant program. (Page 4, under Community Service Credit)
- Remove the requirement for certain CPTED improvements to be approved by the Police Department. (Page 5, under Exterior Improvements, #14)
- Remove language under ineligible for assistance: "Improvements covered under the City's Façade Improvement Program." (Page 6, under ineligible for assistance, #2)
 - This change allows applicants greater flexibility in accessing funding for a broader range of eligible projects, reducing barriers and streamlining support for property enhancements
- Remove the provision requiring grants exceeding \$30,000 to be approved or denied by the Trustees. (Page 6, section 6, #2)
- Add language stating that for grant funding up to \$75,000, the CRA

Director will approve or deny the application.

- Add language to state this grant program can be used as Owner Equity to satisfy the Owner Funding requirements of other city-managed financial assistance programs. (Page 7, #12)
 - This change enhances applicant leverage by allowing CRA grant funds to be used as Owner Equity toward meeting funding requirements for other city-managed financial programs, thereby increasing access to broader financial resources.
- Updated Notary
- Updated the Project Detail Budget form
- Additional Formatting

These updates will improve customer service, enhance clarity, and remove barriers for applicants.

STRATEGIC PRIORITY:

1.5 Embrace a culture of innovation that drives continuous improvement and successfully serves all our customers.

3.1 Support neighborhood identity through services and programs that empower community pride and belonging.

Trustee Mannino moved to approve recommended changes to the North Greenwood Commercial Grant Program and authorize the appropriate officials to execute same. The motion was duly seconded and carried unanimously.

4.4 Approve the 2024 Annual Financial Statement.

Presentation of the fiscal year 2024 Annual Financial Statement by external auditors.

STRATEGIC PRIORITY:

1.1 Provide evidence-based measurement tools to continually guide municipal performance and promote accountable governance.

Auditor John Brielmaier provided a PowerPoint presentation.

Trustee Cotton moved to approve the 2024 Annual Financial Statement. The motion was duly seconded and carried unanimously.

4.5 Discuss or schedule an Executive Session for active litigation.

The City Attorney said the request for the Executive Session is related to the Crumm litigation. He said the City has been dismissed from the matter but the CRA remains as the only defendant. Per Florida Statutes, the session can only be attended by the Trustees, the City Attorney, the City Manager, and outside counsel. The private session has been scheduled for May 21, 2025 at 4:00 p.m.

4.6 Downtown Revitalization.

A monthly opportunity for CRA Trustees to exchange ideas and address downtown-related topics, and priorities.

STRATEGIC PRIORITY:

2.1 Strengthen public-private initiatives that attract, develop, and retain diversified business sectors.

2.3 Promote Clearwater as a premier destination for entertainment, cultural experiences, tourism, and national sporting events.

5. Director's Report

CRA Executive Director Jesus Niño said communication efforts with business stakeholders regarding the upcoming construction continues. Public Communications is developing a communications strategy. As part of the activation efforts for the 400 and 500 blocks of Cleveland Street, staff is working with Parks and Recreation to incorporate the same type of lighting at Coachman Park. He said letters will be sent to property owners adjacent to the uneconomic remainder parcels this Friday to see if they are interested in acquiring the properties. The vetting process for the residential surplus properties by internal departments will be completed by this Friday. He said a Request for Letters of Interest for the ten residential parcels will be advertised on May 8, 2025. He said staff is looking at partnering with the Downtown Development Board to implement a decorative European-type umbrellas for the Downtown businesses to bring some uniformity to the area. Mr. Niño reviewed recent and upcoming events.

In response to questions, Mr. Niño said the communication strategy Public Communications is working on will include parking information. He said staff is considering a "freebee" service to shuttle Downtown visitors to/from parking sites.

Clearwater Arts Alliance representative Betsy Walch said the Sculpture

360 program has been rebranded to the Clearwater Sculpture Series. She said the organization did not receive enough funding for one complete rotation. The rebranding will allow the series to go beyond Cleveland Street in the future. The new program will be in place through October 7, 2026. Ms. Walch provided a PowerPoint presentation of the current installment.

6. Adjourn

The meeting adjourned at 1:38 p.m.

Attest

Chair
Community Redevelopment Agency

City Clerk